

REVIEW DRAFT

Preliminary Report on a study of the effects of long-term Viet Cong/
Viet Minh control on Rural Vietnamese Social Structure and Attitudes and
Value Orientations of the Vietnamese Peasantry.

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I. Introduction

This is a preliminary report on the findings of a study of the effects of long-term Viet Cong/Viet Minh control on rural Vietnamese social structure and attitudes and value orientations of the Vietnamese peasantry. The research was funded by SEADAG Grant 69076 administered by The Asia Society.

The authors' carried out the field research for the study in An Xuyen Province, Republic of Viet-Nam during the summer of 1969. Field work was conducted in cooperation with the Combat Development Test Center, research arm of the Vietnamese Joint General Staff. Colonel Nguyen Quy Toan, CDTC Director, assigned Aspirant Ho Huu Hanh as counterpart officer to the project. Aspirant Hanh worked in the field with the authors for the duration of the study and subsequently prepared a special report on the project findings for distribution through Vietnamese Government channels. The present report, however, was prepared by the American authors without being able to check their conclusions with Aspirant Hanh.

Interviewing of the villagers in Ca Mau was conducted by 22 locally hired high school students and teachers supervised by two university students from Saigon who had worked with the authors on previous studies. As has been our experience in the past we found that a major fringe benefit of such field work is to sensitize urban youths to the way of life and problems faced by their rural compatriots. Students who had spoken disparagingly of the "nhaques" at the start of the project were wearing black pajamas and happily living in the villagers' houses at the end.

Logistic support in the field was provided by CORDS. Province Senior Advisor Lt. Col. Donald Sawyer and his staff generously shared their limited accommodations and vehicles. Mr. Byron Bahl, DPSA, and Mr. Stevenson McIlvaine, NLD Advisor, helped greatly in the selection of the study sites and the recruitment of interviewers.

This report is organized into three major sections which provide a discussion of the research methodology (Section II), a description of findings on value-orientations (Section III) and an assessment of attitudes toward living conditions under the Front and the Vietnamese Government (Section IV). The extensive data collected on social structure will appear in the project final report.

II. Research Methodology

A. Study Design

This study was designed to test an initial hypothesis that long-term Viet Minh/Viet Cong control has significantly altered both the social structure of rural Vietnamese hamlets and the attitudes and value systems of the peasantry. A simple comparative approach was employed, using data collected in two hamlets in An Xuyen Province.¹ One of these hamlets had been under long-term insurgent control, and the other had never been under insurgent control.

Tan Loc Number Two Hamlet, the one which had been under insurgent control, will for the sake of convenience be referred to throughout this report as the Front Hamlet. It is located near Provincial Route 12, approximately 12 kilometers north of Ca Mau City. One of 6 hamlets comprising Tan Loc Village in the District of Quan Long, it has a population of 639 persons divided into 108 households. The Front Hamlet appears to be a relatively typical representative of hundreds of hamlets in the southern Mekong delta, in that it is ethnically Vietnamese. Its religious orientation is primarily Mahayana Buddhist, and its economy is almost entirely agricultural. It is distinguished from most hamlets, however, by its political history. It was solidly Viet Minh from 1945 until 1954, came under complete Front control in 1960 and was not returned to GVN control until the Accelerated Pacification Campaign of January 1969. It is now considered to be a pro-government hamlet, however, with an HES rating of "C", an elected hamlet chief, and a functioning People's Self Defense Force.

why?

Cay Tram Hamlet (referred to hereafter as Government Hamlet), in Dinh Thanh Village, Quan Long District, has never been under insurgent control, although most of its inhabitants reportedly were pro-Viet Minh during the 1945-1954 period. It straddles National Route 4 approximately 14 kilometers east of Ca Mau City and one kilometer west of the Quan Long District capital. One of the few rural hamlets in the province which has never been under direct insurgent control, this hamlet has nevertheless been subject to guerrilla attacks, propagandizing, an influx of refugees from areas under insurgent control, and has covert Front cadre among its inhabitants. From a population consisting of only about 200 people in 1940, the hamlet has grown greatly in recent years. Government Hamlet now has a population of 1,776, consisting of 272 households. Although the hamlet is primarily agricultural and predominantly Buddhist, it is somewhat atypical of hamlets in the southern delta because of its ease of access to urban centers and the frequency and intensity of its contact with the modernized sectors of Vietnamese society.

¹Although officially named An Xuyen, the Province is referred to by nearly all Vietnamese as Ca Mau, and will usually be designated as such in this report.

The Front Hamlet was selected from among several recently pacified hamlets in Ca Mau because it was fully rural, Buddhist, and had experienced the longest period of complete insurgent control. Also, security conditions at the time permitted our interview teams to range throughout the hamlet in reasonable safety. The Government Hamlet was selected despite its slightly atypical situation because it was the only rural hamlet in the province which had never been under direct insurgent control.

It should be noted before generalizing from these two hamlets to other rural Vietnamese populations that An Xuyen Province is an extreme case of what is in the Vietnamese context a recently settled, frontier society, and for this reason both the social structure and the attitudes and values of the populations studied may differ to some extent from those of rural populations in other parts of the country. This province was selected for study because it was felt that social change attributable to insurgent control would be most clearly defined there, not because it was a typical province. Data obtained in this study is intended primarily to indicate areas in which such change is taking place and the direction of this change. It is probable that the rate of change and the relative position of villagers upon any of the several continuums being studied may vary significantly from region to region in Viet-Nam.

B. Data Collection Instruments

Five standardized Vietnamese language questionnaires were employed in this study. Each instrument will be discussed in greater detail in the relevant data section of the report.

- 1) The Household Census Card (HCC) elicited information on the name, age, sex, kinship status, occupation, physical condition, education, religion and ethnicity of each person in residence in a hamlet household.
- 2) The Social Structure Questionnaire (SSQ), consisting of 55 basic items, was designed to generate information on extended kinship ties, land tenure patterns, economic behavior, extra-familial social organizations and political affiliations.
- 3) The Self-Anchoring Attitude Scale (SAS) is a translated version of the standard SAS developed by F.P. Kilpatrick and Hadley Cantril.
- 4) The Taxonomy of Concerns (TCQ) is an instrument designed to measure the Time, Man-Nature and Relational value orientations as developed and defined by Florence Kluckhohn and her co-workers. The TCQ utilizes more and shorter items than the original Kluckhohn instrument, however, and separates the items into three broad content areas: Economics and Business, Personal and Social, Government and Community.
- 5) The Selected Respondent's Questionnaire (SRQ) elicited information on the social and demographic characteristics of each respondent included in the sample. Also included were questions on travel experience and exposure to mass media. Special annexes were administered to the Revolutionary Development cadre sample and the Hoi Chanh sample to collect information on their respective experiences with the GVN and the National Liberation Front.

Only minimal pretesting and revision of questionnaires was required because with the exception of the Social Structure Questionnaire all schedules had been employed in Viet-Nam by the authors in earlier studies. The SSQ was itself, however, a composite of questions used on earlier studies, so it too required minimal pretesting.

C. Sample Design

The hamlets were first mapped, and each household received a control number which appeared on all protocols relating to that household. Then each house was visited by an interviewer, who explained the purpose of the interviewer team in visiting the hamlet and made an effort to establish a friendly and cooperative relationship. At this time, a Census Card and Social Structure Questionnaire (SSQ) were filled out for each household. Every individual reported in the census was then assigned a special identification number.

After all residents who had established residence in the hamlet after 1961 were excluded, four separate lists were made, consisting of (1) all males between the ages of 14 and 30; (2) all females aged 14 through 30; (3) all males aged 40 and older; and (4) all females aged 40 and older. Twenty-five respondents were selected from each list on the basis of a table of random numbers, giving a total of 100 respondents from each hamlet. In the few cases where it was not possible to interview a designated respondent, substitutes were randomly selected from the appropriate name list.

There were a number of reasons for stratifying the sample in this way. Age and sex were assumed, based upon earlier work and experience, to be major socio-demographic variables relating to differences in value orientations.² The sample age ranges were chosen to ensure that the younger cohort in Front Hamlet would have received the maximum period of socialization under insurgent rule and that any formal education would have been in Front-run schools, while the lower limit of the older age range was established as high as possible in order to maximize the effect of the age variable on value differences. Refugees who had settled in a hamlet after 1960 were excluded to insure that all respondents from a hamlet had had essentially the same amount of exposure to the Front.

Data is available for purposes of comparison from an earlier study done on the values of rural Vietnamese villagers in the vicinity of My Tho in Dinh Tuong Province in 1967. All Field work done in this earlier project was done under the direction of Jamieson, and the techniques of interviewing used and the content of the basic values instrument are identical to those used in this study. The only significant difference between the two studies lies in the sample design. The earlier study was based upon a completely random sample, while the current study used a stratified sample.

²Education was considered an equally important variable, but the size of the populations under study was too small to permit control of this dimension through sample stratification.

Differences in the data from the three hamlets are consistent with those which would be expected on the basis of relative exposure to GVN and Viet Minh/Viet Cong influence, but it seems probable that to some extent these differences are reflections of differences between the two provinces and perhaps of more general changes which occurred throughout the delta during the two-year interval between studies.

III. The Measurement of Values-Orientations

A. The Instruments

Selected value orientations of one hundred peasants in each hamlet and fifty Revolutionary Development Cadre and fifty rallied Viet Cong cadre (Hoi Chanh) were compared by means of the Taxonomy of Concerns (TCQ). The TCQ is primarily a derivation of the work on value orientations done by Florence Kluckhohn and her co-workers. (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck). We have selected three of the five value orientations defined in the earlier work for use in this study. These three orientations are: Time (What is the temporal focus of life?), Man-Nature (What is the relationship of man to nature and the supernatural?), and Relational (What is man's relationship to other men?).

Items in the TCQ are shorter and greater in number than those employed in Kluckhohn's original instrument. For each orientation, nine items were employed, with three items being selected from each of three broad content areas (Economic and Business Concerns, Personal and Social Concerns, and Government and Community Concerns.)

The Man-Nature items are designed to test the extent to which the world is perceived to be an orderly and controllable place. The three alternatives in this orientation are (1) Subjugation-to-Nature (fatalism), (2) Harmony-with-Nature (oneness of man, nature, and supernatural), and (3) Mastery-over-Nature (man can and should shape his destiny and influence his environment).

The concept of subjugation to nature is the alternative most frequently associated with technologically backward peoples and so-called under-developed nations. If the conceptualization of the Man-Nature relationship is that of harmony, there is no real separation of man, nature and supernatural. This alternative has been associated with the Chinese, Japanese, and Navajo cultures, among others, and may be assumed to be the dominant orientation of traditional Vietnamese society. The position of mastery over nature is of course the dominant one in American society, and is universally associated with an emphasis upon technology and innovation.

The Relational items are designed to measure the relative importance of three universal principles upon which the nature of an individual's relationship with other men can be determined. These three principles are (1) Lineal (importance of group goals, hierarchy, representative roles), (2) Collateral (importance of group goals, primacy of peer group, laterally extended relationships, cooperative effort), and (3) Individualistic (importance of autonomy of individual). The lineal position has been associated with both Chinese and Japanese cultures, with European traditional upper-class or aristocratic societies in general, and certainly has been the position of traditional Vietnamese society. The collateral position is the overwhelming preference of Navajo culture, and seems to be of importance in most if not all tribal societies. The individualistic position is strongly dominant in American society, and strong in middle-class western or westernized societies in general.

The Time items are designed to measure the relative importance of Past (or traditional), Present (or situational), and Future (or goal-oriented) considerations. Traditional Vietnamese society clearly assigned highest

priority to past time considerations, and as in the traditional Chinese society from which their world view was adapted, social manifestations of this orientation have included ancestor worship and strong family traditions.

The Spanish-American culture studied by F. Kluckhohn revealed a strong preference for the present time alternative, as did the Zuni. The future orientation, of course, has been dominant in American culture, and it is the apparent lack of future, goal-oriented behavior which disturbs many Americans so much in their dealings with many other cultural groups.

Time limitations both upon work in the field and upon analysis precluded a rank ordering of alternatives as well as any attempt to determine the extent of perceived consensus (views on what other people think). For each item, only a first-choice answer was solicited. All protocols were administered orally by trained local Vietnamese interviewers, and the sequence of alternatives was varied randomly throughout the interviewing for each item.

We feel that the approach described above is a fruitful one, and that the TCQ in its present form is a useful instrument. Yet the number of items is so small and the quality of items so uneven that the measures must be regarded as crude ones, useful only for gross comparisons of dominant orientations between clearly differentiated populations. It is extremely difficult to construct items which are a pure expression of one and only one value orientation, and in which all alternatives within that orientation are equally well expressed and carefully defined. Ideally, some items should be dropped, still others should be revised, and many more should be developed and tested before definitive statements are made about the relative strength of the several alternatives within an orientation for any given population.

B. Findings on Values-Orientations

In the discussion that follows, the relative strengths of alternatives are expressed in percentages. For each cohort, all items in a category were combined and simple percentages taken of the totals of the combined score for each alternative. Thus, if cohort A consisted of 25 respondents, each of whom selected one alternative for each of three items in a particular orientation and content area, response totals for each item would total 25, and response totals for the three items combined would total 75. Percentages for the cohort were based on these 75 responses. Percentages do not always add up to 100% because the percentage for each alternative has been rounded off to the nearest whole number, and there were often a small percentage of no response categories not mentioned in the text. All figures are based upon preliminary hand tallies, and no statistical tests of significance have yet been applied. It should be noted that throughout the narrative portion of this section, such descriptive terms as "strong" or "weak" preference refer to the number of times an alternative was selected, and there is no measurement of intensity of commitment.

1. Man-Nature Value Orientation

In the data on the Man-Nature value orientation, only a slight difference can be detected between the Government and Front villagers. In general, the preference of subjugation is consistently weak (never selected more than 20% of the time by either hamlet in any content area), and the relative strength of preference for dominance over harmony varies according to content area. In all three content areas, significant difference of degree (although not rank order) of preferences occur between cadre and villagers, although not between VC and GVN cadre nor between Front and Government villagers. A slight but perhaps important difference is to be found in the area of government and community concerns, however, highlighting the criticality of considering content area in the measurement of values.

In the areas of Economics and Business and Personal and Social Concerns, the cadre demonstrate a much more strongly dominant position than do the villagers, but in the area of Government and Community Concerns both groups of cadre and the GVN villagers indicate a preference for harmony over dominance. This phenomenon also appeared in one of the authors' work on values in 1967. Only the Front villagers indicated a slight (45% to 38%) preference for dominance over harmony in the area of Government and Community Concerns. This deviance, while minor, is especially striking since in the other two content areas the VC villagers consistently registered slightly (although not statistically significant) higher scores on the harmony alternative than any other group to which the instrument has been administered.

2. Relational Orientation

The TCQ data on the Relational orientation reveals essentially no difference between Government and Front villagers, only a slight difference between villagers and cadre, and only a slight difference between GVN and VC cadre. Villagers consistently prefer the lineal over the collateral and individualistic considerations which are approximately equal, one somewhat stronger than the other as one moves from cohort to cohort and from content area to content area. This is in contrast to a more varied pattern on the part of the cadre, and in sharp conflict with the pattern demonstrated by Americans previously tested, who revealed a very strong and consistent preference for the individualistic alternative over collateral and a very weak lineal orientation. (Parsons, et.al.)

In the area of Economic and Business Concerns all cohorts exhibit a strong preference for the lineal position except the older GVN male cohort, which is fairly evenly divided among the lineal (35%), collateral (36%), and individualistic (28%) alternatives. In general, experience in and exposure to commercial activities appears to move villagers away from a strong lineal position toward collateral and individualistic considerations. Government villagers tend to have weaker lineal positions than Front villagers, consistent with their greater exposure to and opportunity to participate in commercial activities. The exception to the weaker lineal position found in the Government villagers is the younger female cohort, which includes many girls who because of their age and social roles have led relatively sheltered lives.

In the area of Personal and Social Concerns villagers again evidence a slight preference for the lineal position (Government 39%; Front 40%) over approximately equal collateral (Government 30%; Front 27%) and individualistic (Government 29%; Front 32%) considerations. VC cadre show a slight preference for the individualistic alternative (39%) over the lineal (32%) and collateral (29%) alternatives. The GVN cadre show the strongest individualistic preference (52%) over collateral (31%) and a low lineal rating (17%).

In the area of Government and Community Concerns, Government and Front villagers exhibit a similar pattern of preference for the lineal alternative (Government 43%; Front 42%) over the individualistic (Government 30%; Front 28%) and collateral (Government 25%; Front 28%) alternatives. The cadre groups, on the other hand, revealed a slight preference for the individualistic alternative (Government 42%; Front 43%) over lineal (Government 38%; Front 35%) over collateral (Government 20%; Front 21%).

3. Time Orientation

Data on the Time orientation, especially when combined with data from earlier work, shows a significant difference between Government and Front villagers and cadre. In general, Viet Minh/NLF influence has produced a stronger future orientation and a weaker present orientation among villagers than has GVN influence, while all cadre show a stronger future orientation than do villagers. Both educational/indoctrinational and specific situational factors have combined to make the Time orientation the one of greatest contrast between the various groups.

In the area of Economic and Business Concerns we find both GVN and VC cadre with an overwhelmingly predominant preference for future considerations (Government 61%; Front 74%) over past (Government 21%; Front 17%) over present (Government 17%; Front 9%). Both groups of Ca Mau villagers show a pattern of preference for future considerations (Government 57%; Front 49%) over present (Government 26%; Front 26%) over past (Government 15%; Front 23%). It is postulated that the lack of actual business experience and perceived economic opportunity by the commercially isolated Front villagers in Ca Mau accounts for the fact that their future orientation is slightly lower than that of the Government villagers in this content area.

In the area of Personal and Social Concerns the GVN cadre show a preference for future (40%) and present (38%) considerations over past (22%) considerations, while the VC cadre chose future considerations (43%) over past (26%) and present (25%) ones. This presents a significant contrast with the roughly corresponding American sample, who showed an overwhelming preference for present time considerations (79%) in this area over future (17%)

over past (3%). Front villagers in Ca Mau indicated a preference for the future alternative (42%) over past (30%) and present (27%) considerations. Government villagers in Ca Mau, however, showed approximately equal strength in all three alternatives: past (31%), present (31%) and future (33%). Government villagers near My Tho studied in 1967 present a sharp contrast in preferring present (44%) over past (35%) over future (16%).

In the area of Government and Community Concerns both GVN and VC cadre prefer future (Government 61%; Front 67%) over present (Government 29%; Front 20%) over past (Government 10%; Front 13%) time considerations. The Government villagers of the My Tho study in this area again present a sharp contrast of preference for present (61%) over future (21%) over past (7%) considerations.

IV. Attitudes: The Assessment of Living Conditions Under the Front and the GVN

The attitudes of one hundred peasants in each hamlet and fifty GVN Revolutionary Development Cadre and fifty former VC cadre who had rallied to the Government were assessed using the Self-Anchoring Attitude Scale (SAS) developed by Kilpatrick and Cantril. This section is a summary report on the analysis of hand tallies made in the field of responses to the "ladder-rating" questions of this instrument.

In the administration of this instrument, respondents are shown a drawing of a ten-rung ladder and are told that above the top rung is found the best imaginable life while below the bottom rung is found the worst life imaginable. They are then asked to place their present life on the ladder scale and to indicate where they stood five years ago and where they expect to stand five years in the future. The same set of questions is then asked about the Vietnamese nation. This technique has been employed in numerous countries (Cantril) including Viet-Nam (Rambo, Brown & Estermann) and appears to be one of the more reliable cross-cultural instruments for the measurement of attitudes.

Table 1 and Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4 present data on the ladder ratings from each group in the study, along with comparative data from Vietnamese displaced persons (refugees and evacuees) collected by one of the authors in 1967 and from Cantril's sample of Americans.

It can be seen that the sample groups display essentially the same directional trends in their ladder ratings. Thus the present is rated higher than the past and the future is rated higher than either past or present by all groups except the evacuees and the refugees who rate the present as distinctly lower than either the past or the future. This difference in mean ratings between the villagers and the displaced persons is evidence for the validity of data generated by the self-anchoring scaling technique; the fact that the displaced persons are presently living under objectively worse conditions than they were five years ago is clearly reflected in their self-assigned ladder ratings for each time period.

The mean rating for personal life situation five years ago for the Front villagers is considerably lower than the rating made by the Government villagers (3.13 compared to 4.22; this difference of 1.09 steps on the ladder scale is significant at the .01 level). Examination of Figure 1, "Personal Ladder Ratings: Villagers," shows that over half of the Front villagers rated life under the Communists at ladder step three or lower whereas the Government villagers' responses are more normally distributed.

Front and Government villagers show the same contrasts in their assessments of the national ladder ratings for five years ago as they do in their past personal ratings.

The Ralliers rate their past, when they were with the Viet Cong, much lower than is the case for the GVN cadre sample.¹ (A mean ladder rating of 2.98 compared to 4.59. The difference of 1.61 steps is significant at the .01 level.) Interestingly, the Ralliers' mean rating of Viet-Nam's overall situation five years ago is slightly higher than the mean for the GVN cadre. (4.42 compared to 4.24. The difference is not statistically significant, however.) The great difference between the Ralliers' past personal and national ratings suggests that their alienation from the NLF developed as a consequence of purely personal concerns rather than as an "ideological" reaction against Front social and political policies.

All sample groups have similar mean ratings for present personal and national situations. (Differences between groups are non-significant.) In comparison to the Government villagers and GVN cadre however, both the Front villagers and VC cadre report major betterment in their personal lives and in the national situation as compared to five years ago. Two interpretations of this finding can be made; 1) Life under the Front actually was much harder and more unpleasant than life under the Saigon government, or 2) Either for reason of conscious political advantage or unconscious dissonance reduction respondents who were associated with the Viet Cong downgrade their estimates of the quality of life under the Front and exaggerate the benefits of living under the GVN.

All of the sample groups expect to see considerable improvement in the quality of their personal lives in the future and have expectations of radical betterment of the national situation five years from now. (Differences in mean ratings between samples are non-significant.) To the extent that fulfillment of these expectations is frustrated, which Vietnamese political realities would almost seem to ensure, new rural discontent with the "system" is likely to develop.

¹The writers assume that when people rate their personal situations as of five years ago they are actually responding with a generalized assessment of the "past" without specific time referents. Thus, it is likely that respondents who had generally favorable living situations five years ago but who had suffered some sort of catastrophic experiences one or two years prior to testing would generalize from their negative experience and would rate "five years ago" lower than persons who had not suffered bad experiences. On the other hand, respondents who had suffered some sort of calamities only shortly prior to interviewing, so that the calamities were seen as occurring in the "present" time frame, would tend to rate the past higher than is objectively warranted. Thus, with regard to the Ralliers, it is probable that the generally low ratings they assign to their life situation under the Front reflect the unhappy period leading up to their decision to defect and are not an objective assessment of the quality of most of their life with the NLF forces.

TABLE 1 SAS MEAN LADDER RATINGS

PERSONAL RATINGS	VILLAGERS		CADRE		DISPLACED PERSONS*		AMERICANS**
	GOVERNMENT	FRONT	GVN	VC (Ralliers)	REFUGEES	EVACUEES	
PAST	4.22	3.13	4.59	2.98	4.78	5.19	5.9
PRESENT	4.97	4.52	4.92	4.80	2.86	1.81	6.6
FUTURE	6.65	6.95	6.65	7.15	4.39	3.20	7.8
NATIONAL RATINGS							
PAST	4.54	3.64	4.24	4.42	----	----	6.5
PRESENT	6.09	5.48	5.86	6.44	----	----	6.7
FUTURE	7.71	8.30	8.08	8.80	----	----	7.4

*Source: Rambo, Brown & Estermann: 52

**Source: Cantril: 38

FIG. 1: PERSONAL LADDER RATINGS: VILLAGERS

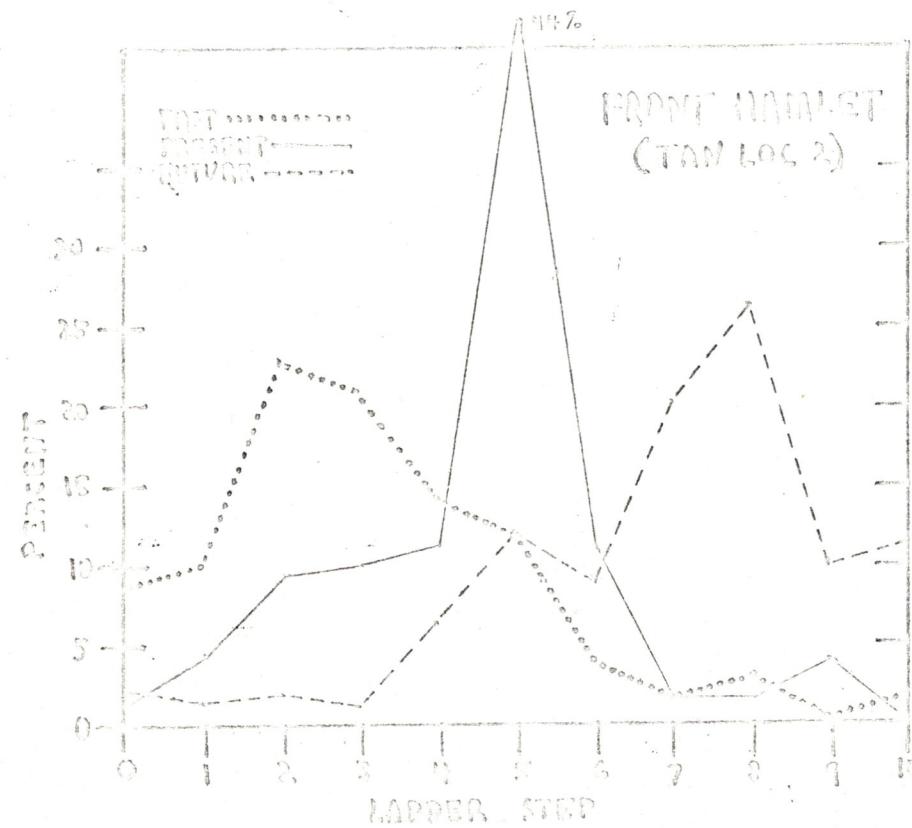
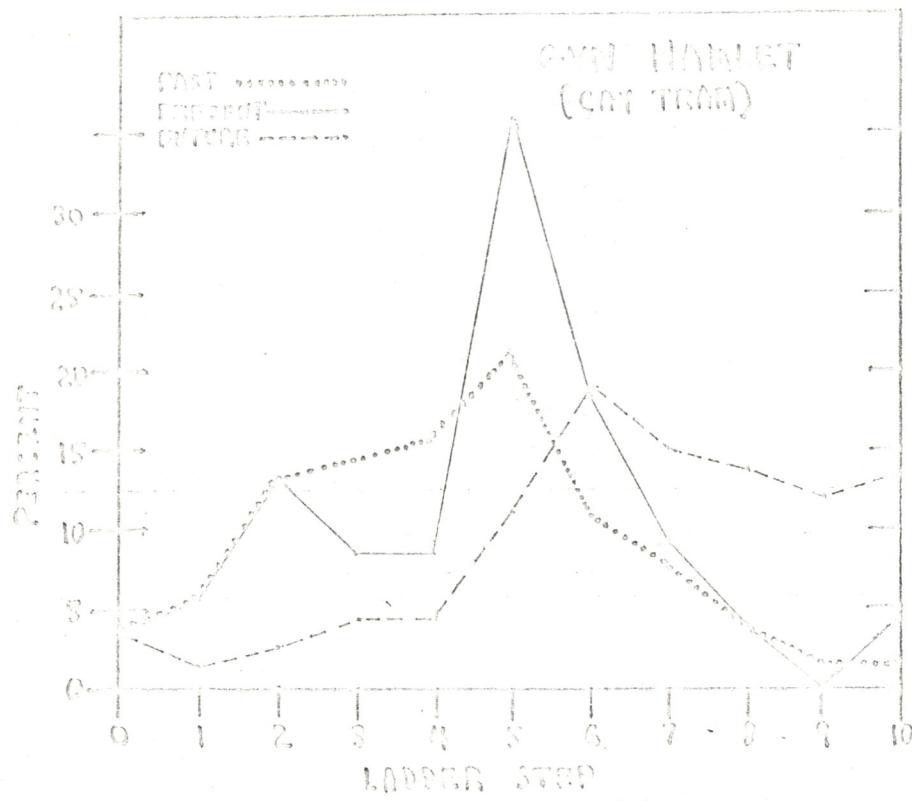


FIG. 2: INTERSOCIAL LADDERS RATING: CAPAB

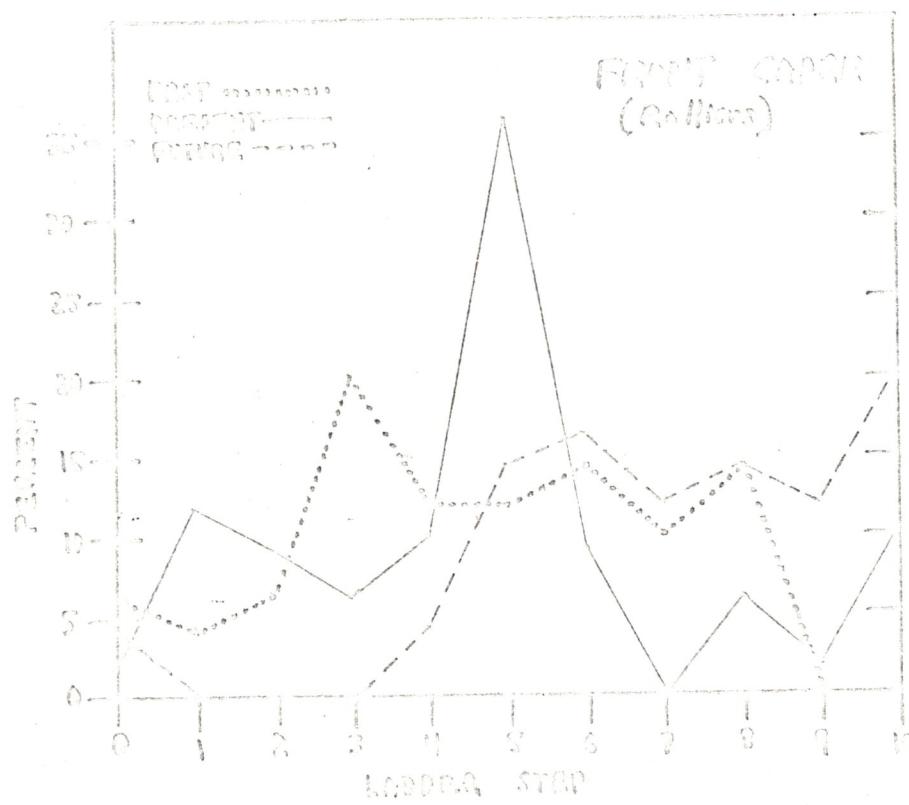
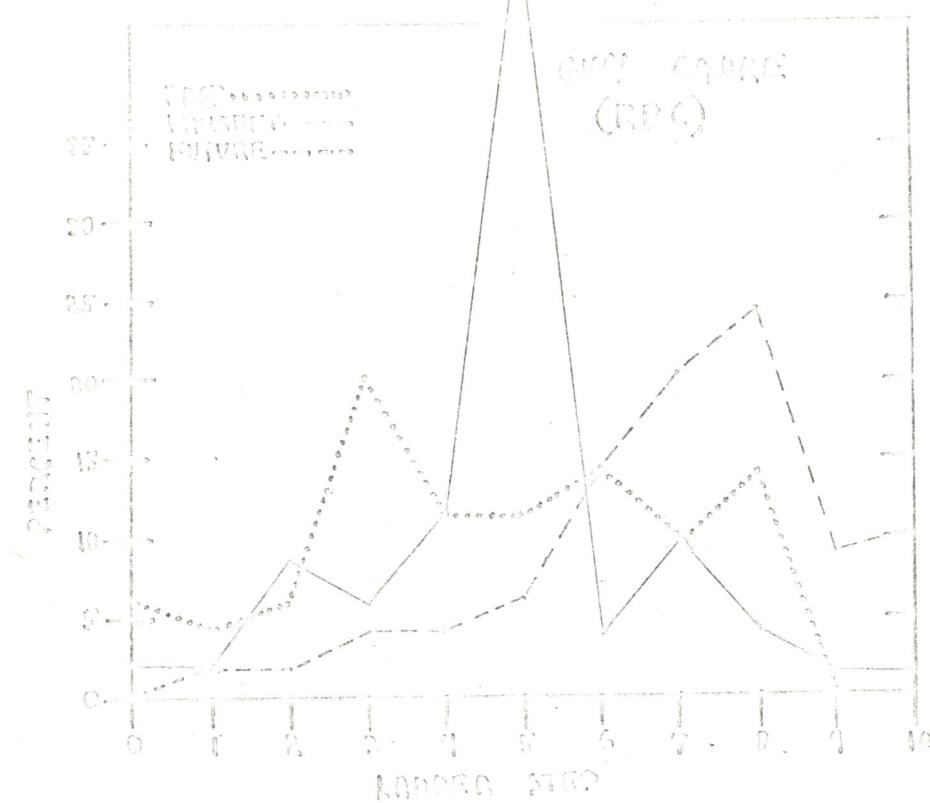


FIG. 3: NATIONAL LADDER RATINGS: VILLAGERS

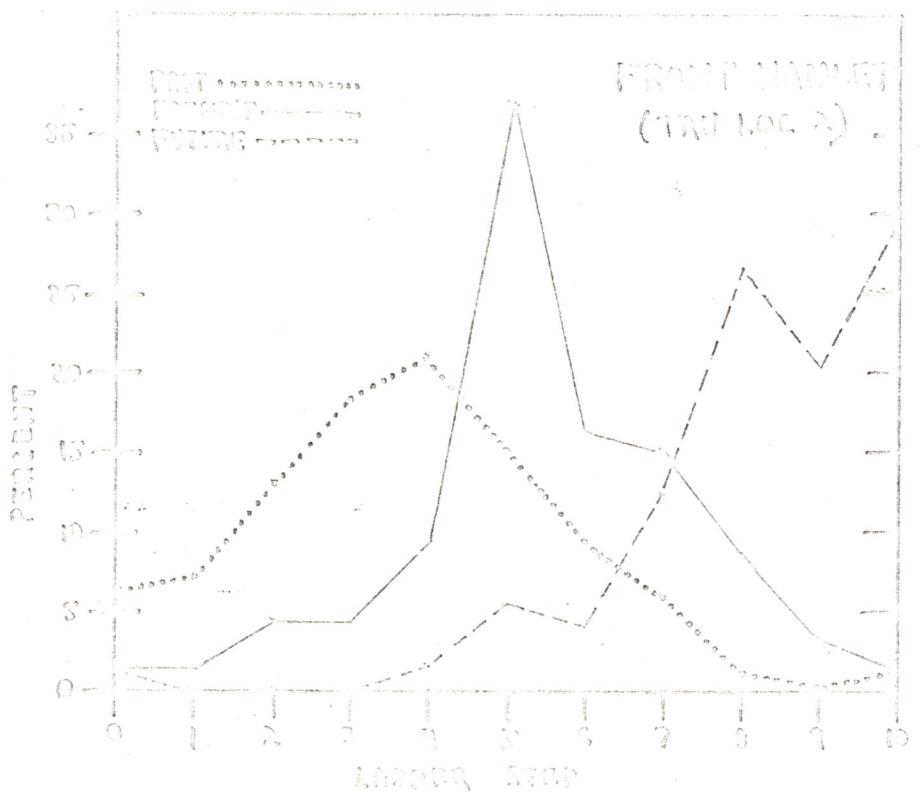
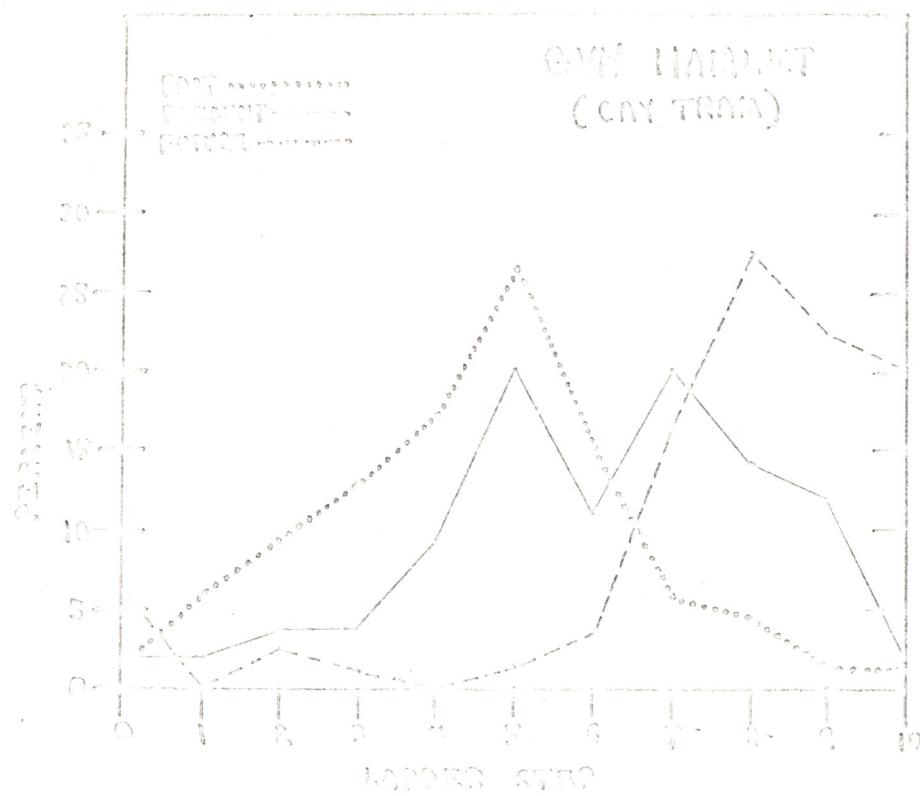
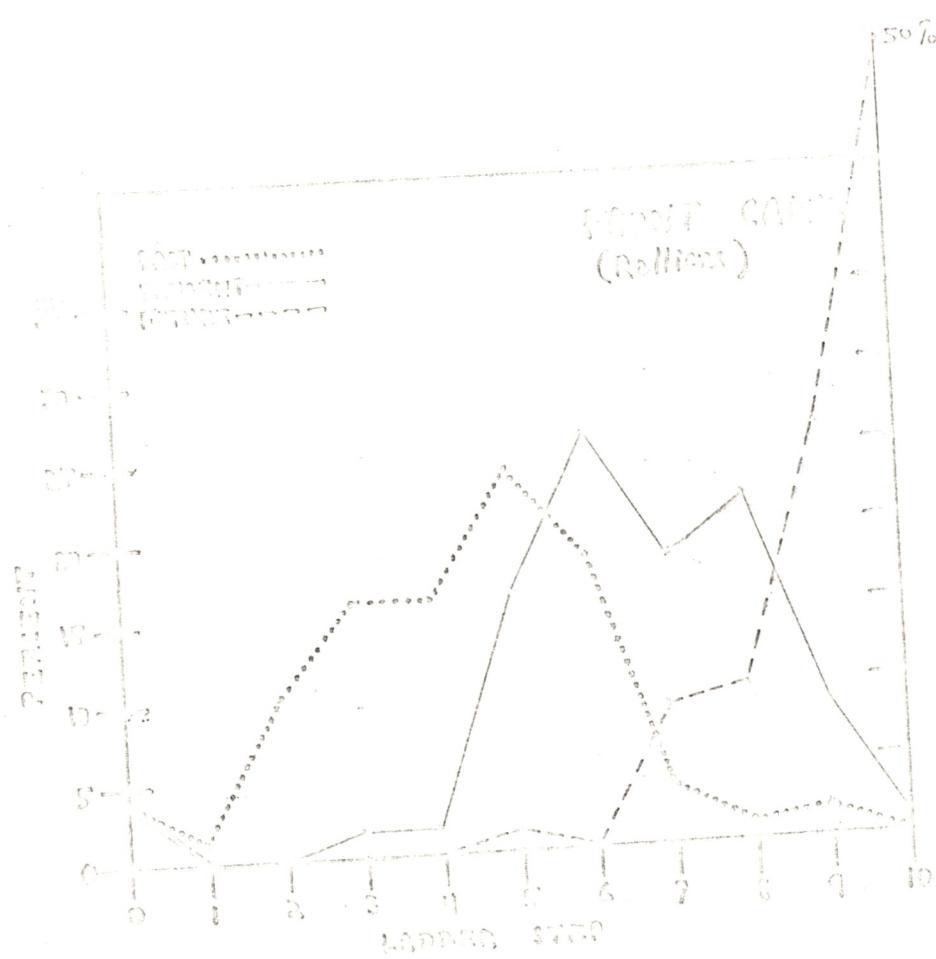
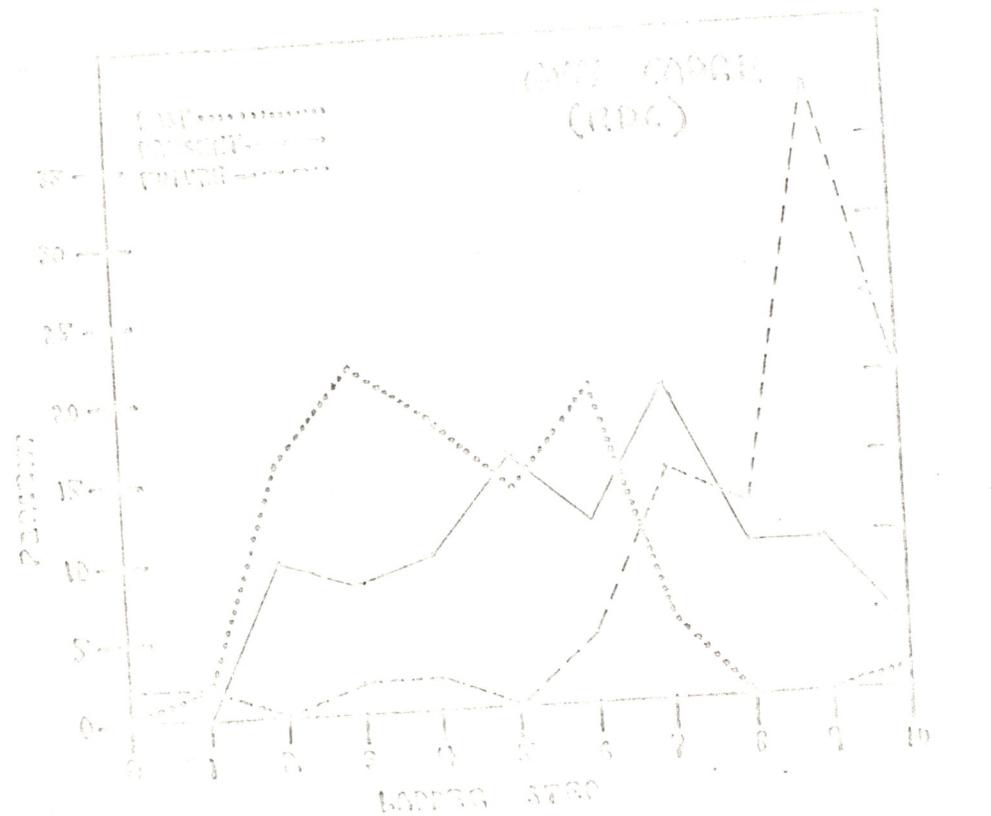


FIG. 4: AUTOMAL LADDA RADIATION CAPTURE



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